

## Target Reading Skill: Identifying the Main Idea

### Identify Implied Main Ideas

Identifying main ideas in your reading will help you remember the important points. One of the first steps in identifying main ideas is to look at each heading and subheading in the section. This will give you the “big picture.”

Sometimes, the main idea is not stated in a single sentence. All the details in a paragraph may point to, or add up to, the main idea. In cases like this, we say that the main idea is implied, or suggested. It is up to you to put the details together and identify the main idea of the paragraph. As you read, ask yourself, “What is happening?” “What is this about?” The answer to these questions will lead you to the main idea.

**Directions:** *In the paragraphs below, the main idea is not stated in a single sentence. It is implied. Read the paragraph and see if you can identify the main idea from the choices below each paragraph.*

1. Early people gathered the seeds of the wild grains. People spent a lot of their time searching for food. However, about 10,000 years ago, people in Southwest Asia decided to try to plant wild wheat to tide them over. The first crop was poor. But farmers saved seeds from the best plants and tried again the next year. Their efforts led to today’s domesticated wheat.
  - a. Farming began when people planted grains.
  - b. Wild grains are hard to grow.
  - c. The domestication of today’s wheat began 10,000 years ago.
  - d. Gathering wild grain is hard.
2. The glaciers were over a mile in thickness. As the glaciers moved they changed the landscape. They dug deep trenches in the land. Water from the melting glaciers filled these trenches to produce the Great Lakes.
  - a. Glaciers melt.
  - b. Glaciers formed the Great Lakes.
  - c. All lakes are formed from glaciers.
  - d. Glaciers change the earth.